

RE: Minister Mendicino follow-up

From: Ninu Forrest <ninu.forrest@tc.gc.ca>
To: "Alhabra, Omar: PARL" <[Irrelevant]@parl.gc.ca>, "Maka, Mike" <mike.maka@tc.gc.ca>, "Dhillon, Angad" <angad.dhillon@tc.gc.ca>, "Hill, Miled" <miled.hill@tc.gc.ca>
Date: Tue, 25 Jan 2022 20:34:48 +0000

Hi Minister,

Received from policy. We will flag at the staff level to our colleagues at Public Safety as well.

Best,
Ninu Forrest

From: Alhabra, Omar - Personal [mailto:[Irrelevant]@parl.gc.ca]
Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2022 3:29 PM
To: Maka, Mike <mike.maka@tc.gc.ca>; Dhillon, Angad <angad.dhillon@tc.gc.ca>; Hill, Miled <Miled.Hill@tc.gc.ca>; Ninu Forrest <ninu.forrest@tc.gc.ca>
Subject: FW: Minister Mendicino follow-up

From: Badawey, Vance - Personal <[Irrelevant]@parl.gc.ca>
Sent: January 24, 2022 1:10 PM
To: Mendicino, Marco - Personal <[Irrelevant]@parl.gc.ca>; Alhabra, Omar - Personal <[Irrelevant]@parl.gc.ca>; Duclos, Jean-Yves - Personnel <[Irrelevant]@parl.gc.ca>; Joly, Melanie - Personnel <[Irrelevant]@parl.gc.ca>
Cc: Lovell, Dan (Badawey, Vance - MP) <[Irrelevant]@parl.gc.ca>
Subject: FW: Minister Mendicino follow-up

FYI...



Vance Badawey

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Parliamentary Secretary – Indigenous Services Canada
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From: Ron Rienas <rr@peacebridge.com>
Sent: January 22, 2022 12:55 AM
To: Badawey, Vance - Personal <[Irrelevant]@parl.gc.ca>
Cc: Tim Clutterbuck <tim.clutterbuck@valbrunaasw.ca>
Subject: Minister Mendicino follow-up

Vance

Thank you for arranging the Zoom meeting with Minister Mendicino today.

As requested, below is a synopsis of the issues discussed.

1. Trucks and the border

Yesterday border delays were 70 -75 minutes entering Canada and trucks were queued across the Peace Bridge and a mile up the I-190 in Buffalo. Truck processing times at Canada Customs have increased from 2 minutes per truck to 3 minutes per truck.

While some truckers are leaving the industry because the vaccination requirements, what is not being talked about is drivers quitting because of border delays that impinge on their hours of service requirements, onerous ArriveCan and PHAC requirements, etc. If they are not quitting the industry they are getting out of the long haul cross border business and switching to only domestic routes.

A U.S. Bureau of Labour report just released states that long haul trucking transportation costs in the U.S. have increased by 25% in the last year. I suspect that if it were to include border long haul that increase would be even larger.

Within the next few weeks and months, I fear we will begin to see the impact in a big way on the Canadian consumer. This article yesterday may be the first of many.

<https://www.niagarafallsreview.ca/business/2022/01/20/shortage-of-truckers-lands-like-a-one-two-punch-for-niagara-firm-80-plus-jobs-in-jeopardy.html>

Steps need to be taken immediately to reduce the processing time to pre-pandemic levels

Rethinking the necessity of asking multiple health related questions as they are not being answered honestly anyway and adding a field on a driver's Fast card to indicate vaccination status, are a couple suggestions.

2. ArriveCan

ArriveCan was developed for the air mode where it works well as the onus is placed on the airlines to encourage completion before boarding plane. It also works for essential land border crossers that cross the border frequently and for low border volumes.

We are currently at only 20% of our pre-pandemic car volumes. Due to the testing requirements most of that traffic is essential and repeat. Currently the average processing time for a non-Nexus car is almost 3 minutes. While there may be some value in maintaining ArriveCan in the short term given the current state of the pandemic and low traffic volumes, the objective should be to eliminate ArriveCan at the land border in the long term for the following reasons:

- as traffic returns to normal the longer processing times associated with ArriveCan and travellers not filing or improperly filing will result in border gridlock.

- ArriveCan is not a binational program like Nexus or Fast and is unknown in the U.S. meaning many American visitors will arrive at the border unprepared

- even Canadian and Americans that are aware of the program will see it as an impediment to crossing the border as it will be seen as another government imposed documentation step that needs to be completed. It will depress discretionary travel and it will negatively impact the economies of border communities.

- will adversely impact travellers, particularly the elderly, who do not have smart phones

- our experience with border requirements that impose additional steps, more documentation, providing more information, create border delays, all result in border avoidance.

I predict that requiring ArriveCan post pandemic will depress border traffic 25-30% compared to pre-pandemic border traffic.

3. Pre-Arrival Readiness Evaluation (PARE)

This is an innovative joint program between the Peace Bridge and U.S. Customs designed to facilitate and streamline Canadian exports to the U.S. as CBP moves to Congressionally mandated 100% screening of all conveyances to the U.S. PARE will accomplish this by relocating CBP inspection technology to Canada given the very constrained U.S plaza.

Everyone we have presented this concept to agrees that PARE benefits Canadian exports to the U.S. and provides security benefits to CBP. These benefits can be replicated at other ports of entry.

We applied to Transport Canada for our International Bridge and Tunnels Act (IBTA) permit in the spring of 2021. We were advised that other government departments including CBSA needed to approve the concept. Thus far those approvals have not been forthcoming meaning the IBTA permit has not been granted. This delay puts the project at risk as CBP is currently in the procurement phase for the equipment and if approval is not granted soon the CBP funding for this project will be pulled.

4. Section 6 of the Customs Act

Section 6 requires toll bridges and tunnels to provide free of charge to the government of Canada all CBSA facilities. This includes building the facilities, utilities, taxes, janitorial, maintenance, grounds keeping including snow removal, etc. The vast majority of border crossings are not tolled and are owned and paid for 100% by the government. Likewise, on the U.S. side of toll bridges the U.S. government pays the bridge operators rent to cover all the costs that the Canadian government demands for free. As you can appreciate, this inconsistency is difficult to reconcile for a binational Board.

It becomes even more unfair during a pandemic when the government restricts cross border travel decimating toll and Duty Free revenue for a bridge authority that is mandated to be self sufficient. Yet the government continues to insist that we continue to pay for 100% for its facilities and in fact asks for improvements that are beyond the scope of Section 6 and at the same time refuses to provide any Covid relief. However, the government has provided Covid relief to airports, some crown corporation owned international bridges, and the privately operated Confederation Bridge.

For the period of the pandemic there should be some form of financial assistance to assist us in providing the services that the government demands, as has been given to others. Longer term the Section 6 legislation should be reviewed through the lens of fairness and consistency.

I trust this accurately covers what we discussed.

Again, thank you Vance for arranging this meeting. I believe it was very helpful and enabled us to make the Minister aware of these important issues. I trust they will be able to be addressed in a meaningful way.

Ron